

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 06902 111004Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OES-07 DLOS-09 EB-07 /078 W

-----120400Z 008993 /12

R 110921Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7646

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMCONSUL NAHA

CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TOKYO 6902

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, JA, KS

SUBJECT: LOWER HOUSE ACTS "THE HARD WAY"

REF: TOKYO 6823

SUMMARY. LOWER HOUSE APPROVED JAPAN-ROK
CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT AND OKINAWA LAND BILL
IN ALL-NIGHTER MAY 10-11. BILLS NOW GO TO
UPPER HOUSE WHICH IS EXPECTED TO ACT ON LAND BILL
BY MAY 14 DEADLINE. ACTION ON SHELF AGREEMENT,
HOWEVER, LIKELY TO GO DOWN TO MAY 28 ADJOURNMENT
WIRE. END SUMMARY.

1. IMPASSE IN DIET DELIBERATIONS ON JAPAN-ROK
CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT AND OKINAWA LAND BILL
WAS BROKEN AT ABOUT 1900 MAY 10, WHEN LOWER HOUSE
STEERING COMMITTEE, OVERRIDING RATHER WEAK OPPOSITION
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 06902 111004Z

OBJECTIONS, DECIDED TO CONVENE PLENARY SESSION WITH
TWO BILLS ON AGENDA. FOLLOWING SEVERAL HOURS OF
DEBATE, CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT WAS APPROVED
WITH SUPPORT OF LDP AND DSP.

2. AT ABOUT 2200, PLENARY SESSION TURNED TO OKINAWA
LAND BILL, WHICH, FOLLOWING ALL-NIGHT SESSION INCLUDING

SEVERAL RECESSES AND INTRODUCTION AND DEFEAT OF VARIOUS OBSTRUCTIONIST MOTIONS, WAS PASSED AT 0840 MAY 11. LDP, DSP AND NLC VOTED IN FAVOR WHILE JSP, JCP AND CGP VOTED AGAINST.

3. COMMENT. ONCE AGAIN, JAPANESE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS ARRIVED AT WHAT HAD LONG BEEN CONSIDERED FOREGONE CONCLUSION THE "HARD WAY." AS OF LAST WEEKEND, IT HAD BEEN AGREED AT STEERING COMMITTEE LEVEL THAT TWO BILLS WOULD RECEIVE ROUTINE APPROVAL DURING MAY 10 LOWER HOUSE SESSION. OPPOSITION AGREED NOT TO RESIST CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT AND WAS AWARE OF NEED TO ACT ON OKINAWA BILL BEFORE MAY 14 DEADLINE. OVER WEEKEND, HOWEVER, IT APPEARED THAT JSP AND PERHAPS CGP WERE VISITED BY OKINAWA GROUPS OPPOSED TO LAND BILL AND BEGAN TO SEE SOME ELECTION ADVANTAGE IN PUTTING UP OSTENSIBLY STRENUOUS OPPOSITION, WHICH ULTIMATELY LED TO ALL-NIGHT SESSION.

4. TIMETABLE FOR TWO BILLS STILL REMAINS UNCLEAR. LDP AND GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES ARE STRIVING TO HAVE OKINAWA LAND BILL TAKEN UP BY UPPER HOUSE CABINET COMMITTEE MAY 12 AND PASSED BY UPPER HOUSE BEFORE MAY 14 DEADLINE. CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT WILL BE TAKEN UP BY UPPER HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WITHIN NEXT SEVERAL DAYS, BUT WITH DIET SCHEDULED TO ADJOURN MAY 28, PROSPECTS FOR UPPER HOUSE PASSAGE ARE UNCERTAIN. UPPER HOUSE STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TOLD EMBOFF MAY 10 THAT UNLESS LDP DECIDES TO ACCELERATE COMMITTEE DEBATE TIME-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 TOKYO 06902 111004Z

TABLE, ACTION ON AGREEMENT WITHIN SESSION IS DOUBTFUL. WHILE THERE HAS BEEN TALK OF EXTENDING SESSION IN ORDER TO ALLOW AUTOMATIC UPPER HOUSE APPROVAL OF SHELF AGREEMENT, LDP LEADERS HAVE REPEATEDLY DENIED ANY SUCH INTENTION AND ANY MOVE TO EXTEND SESSION WILL BE RESISTED STRONGLY BY JSP, JCP AND CGP. OUR BET IS THAT UPPER HOUSE ACTION ON AGREEMENT -- AND DECISION ON EXTENSION -- WILL GO RIGHT DOWN TO WIRE. SHOESMITH

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